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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 MINSK 000383

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#)

SUBJECT: KOZULIN'S WIFE MEETS AMBASSADOR

REF: A. MINSK 342

[1](#)B. MINSK 223

Classified By: AMBASSADOR GEORGE KROL FOR REASONS 1.4 (B,D)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: On April 4, Irina Kozulin, wife of imprisoned opposition presidential candidate Aleksandr Kozulin, told Ambassador that her husband is still suffering from back pain and has bronchitis, but visible signs of his beatings have disappeared. However, he is receiving good treatment and has no complaints about prison conditions. Irina explained that her husband led the March 25 demonstration to Okryestina to avoid violent confrontations between the restless youth and anxious security services. Irina, who was not present when riot police disbanded the demonstration, accused Commander Pavlichenko and his bodyguards of personally beating Kozulin and instigating the violence that took place. Although her husband is in jail as a political prisoner, opposition [8](#) and [10](#) Coalition candidate Aleksandr Milinkevich has not once called Irina to give his sympathies and has shown little support for her jailed husband. Kozulin could face up to six years in jail, but it is unknown when his trial will begin as the prosecutors have until May 25 to gather evidence. End Summary.

Wife Visits Kozulin in Detention Center  
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[1](#)2. (C) Irina Kozulin on April 4 told Ambassador that she and her youngest daughter were finally allowed to see Kozulin on April 1, one week after his arrest, at the detention center in Zhodino. Although separated by glass and iron bars, Irina and her husband were allowed to speak for two hours. Kozulin no longer had visible bruises on his face, but complained of back pain resulting from his March 25 beating (ref A), bronchitis, and a high temperature. Although his health is not good, Kozulin said he is treated well at the detention center and is respected by the guards. He had no complaints about prison conditions.

Kozulin Charged, But Must Wait Months for Trial  
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[1](#)3. (C) The Prosecutor General's Office charged Kozulin with hooliganism resulting from his March 2 beating (ref B) and for organizing and participating in the March 25 demonstration. He could face up to six years in jail. Irina told Ambassador that the prosecution has two months beginning from the date of Kozulin's arrest to gather evidence and build a case against her husband. Therefore, it could be until the end of May before Kozulin's court case begins. (Note: Under the law investigators can extend his pre-trial detention up to 18 months. In practice, other political

prisoners have been held up to nine months before going to trial.)

14. (C) Irina claimed that after the March 25 protest in Yanki Kupali square, the youth participants, energy was volatile and Kozulin knew violent confrontations with police were inevitable if he did not lead the demonstrators away from the city,s center. Therefore, he led the participants in a peaceful and law-abiding march to Okryestina to show support for colleagues arrested. All demonstrators obeyed traffic rules, crossed streets only on green lights, and remained on the sidewalks. The riot police instigated the violence.

Pavlichenko Attacked Kozulin  
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15. (C) Irina told Ambassador that SOBR Commander Dmitry Pavlichenko was responsible for Kozulin,s back injury. Before the riot police clashed with demonstrators, Kozulin approached Pavlichenko in an attempt to stave off violence. After realizing that a dialogue was not possible, Kozulin turned his back to Pavlichenko to divert the demonstrators to a nearby church. Pavlichenko then gave Kozulin several hard blows to the back followed by a beating from Pavlichenko,s bodyguards. They brought Kozulin to Zavadski police station and called a team of paramedics, who determined that Kozulin needed to be taken to a hospital immediately. Dissatisfied, the authorities called a second team of paramedics, who claimed Kozulin did not need any serious medical assistance.

16. (C) During his transportation to the Zhodino detention center, Special Forces officers continued to beat Kozulin (see Ref A for full description of the beating). According to Irina, Kozulin was forced to sit on his knees as a punishment for his campaign statements calling for

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Belarusians to &rise up from their knees8 against the regime.

No Support From Milinkevich  
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17. (C) When asked, Irina claimed that 10 Coalition candidate Aleksandr Milinkevich had not once called her with his sympathies. The only phone call she had received was from deputy leader of the United Civic Party Aleksandr Dobrovolsky. Irina told Ambassador she did not need such gestures, but was surprised that these opposition &colleagues8 of Kozulin, who was now a political prisoner, were not giving support.

Russia,s Response  
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18. (C) Irina tried to appeal to the Russian Ambassador to pressure the GOB to release her husband but her attempt was unsuccessful. When Irina arrived at the Russian Embassy with a letter addressed to the Russian Ambassador, she was kept in the lobby for several minutes and then told the Ambassador was too busy to see her. (Note: She delivered a similar letter to Post addressed to President Bush. See para 10.)

Kozulin,s Family  
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19. (C) Kozulin,s wife and daughters are facing their own problems as a result of their father,s political activities. Kozulin,s oldest daughter has two degrees and was an excellent student, but is having difficulties finding and/or keeping jobs because of the authorities, pressure on her employers. The youngest daughter is still in school, but according to Irina, is very energetic like her father and intends to find a job to supplement the family,s income. Irina continues her job as a market analyst at Belarusian State University and did not mention any problems at work.

However, security services continue to follow her and her family on a regular basis.

10. (SBU) Letter To President Bush from Irina Kozulin  
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(Note: Letter delivered in English and presented here exactly as provided.)

To the President of the Russian Federation Putin V.V.,

To the President of the United States of America G. Bush,

To the European Parliament deputies,

To the heads of the European Commission

To the heads of state and governments ) EU Member States

Distinguished Mr. Presidents! Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

I am a loving wife, mother of two children, and a grandmother. Up until recently I had nothing to do with big politics. I worked, raised my children and grandson, and helped my husband in his professional activities. However, recent developments in Belarus have drastically changed my life.

I do not want to nor have the right to give political assessment of the elections, although as a citizen I am extremely indignant over the cynicism of their organizers, who committed violations of legislation and falsified the results. I view the events in the country from the point of a person whose life was suddenly changed by great grief, just as many of my countrymen faced it too.

On March 25, a husband of mine Alexander Kazulin, realizing the willingness of peaceful protesters to move towards jail to morally support our numerous fellowmen, arrested previously by the Belarusian regime, stepped in front of the marchers. In first place, he did so in order to prevent any possible clashes with police. All Alexander Kazulin's activities as a leader of social democrats and a candidate for the president of the Republic of Belarus, were targeted namely at the peaceful solution of problems, at preventing the forceful resolution of the Belarusian problem and bloodshed.

The Belarusian authorities turned the peaceful protest into a bloody massacre. They violently apprehended hundreds of

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protesters, including my husband, who suffered brutal beatings, cruel tortures and humiliation during both apprehension and imprisonment. According to recent information, his state of health is seriously deteriorating.

Over the past two weeks over a thousand of our countrymen faced jail for political reasons. Many of them were severely beaten up by the security services, while the fate of some protesters still remains unknown.

So I address you, Presidents V. Putin and G. Bush: do show the will, courage and pride of the heads of two great countries, whose opinion is so much overlooked by the Belarusian dictator, and mere human mercifulness, step over economic, military, political and geo-strategic pragmatism! Demand from Lukashenko to cease humiliation of those who disagree! Do not become distant observers and therefore accomplices in the political terror in the middle of Europe. I am convinced that if you have the desire you will find effective arguments, which Lukashenko and his lackeys will be unable to ignore.

I appeal to the European leaders: do not introduce symbolic sanctions, which mostly target not the isolated statesmen,

but rather the interest of a common citizen and which can never undermine the regime but rather strengthen it. Belarus can never be understood through the internet and tourist trips. Attract Belarusians themselves to work out your policy towards Belarusians, take into account not only opinions of prominent politicians, but simple Belarusians as well.

I call upon female politicians of Europe and worldwide: in the name of your own children,s happiness, in the name of prosperity of your countries ) stop the legal lawlessness that is underway in Belarus! Save my husband and his fellowmen!

There is a crime against humanity taking place in our country! There is a direct danger to the lives and health of the people, who may well disappear without a trace just as Gonchar, Zakharenko, Krasovksy, and Zavadsky did, or die as Karpenko or else suffer imprisonment like Chigir, Leonov, Starovoitov, and Marinich.

This cannot be tolerated! Should this happen you will not be forgiven by neither God nor your own people!

With respect and hope,

Irina Kazulin

29.03.2006

End Letter.

Krol